

Panel wrestles with religious violence issues



Chap. (Maj.) Dean Bonura, 1st Brigade Combat Team chaplain, author Bruce Feiler and Imam Mohammed Al-Ubaidy, spiritual leader for the 14 Ramadan Mosque in Baghdad, discussed violence and common principles shared by religions during a recent panel discussion held at Firebase Melody. Courtesy photo.

By Chap. (Maj.) Dean Bonura, brigade chaplain, "Ready First" Combat Team

Baghdad, Iraq – Drawing upon their common belief in God, an informal panel discussed whether it is possible for Jews, Christians, and Muslims to promote reconciliation in a war weary land where religion is often times blamed for the violence.

Recently, Bruce Feiler, author of *Walking the Bible*, sat down with Imam Mohammed Al-Ubaidy, spiritual leader for the 14 Ramadan Mosque, Baghdad, and myself at Firebase Melody in eastern Baghdad to pose this question and discuss a few others.

All of us at the meeting were very hopeful about the possibilities for peace and stabilization in this region.

This discussion only reinforced what I have already discovered in every conversation I have ever had with religious persons in Baghdad: everyone wants to see an end to senseless violence.

It seems reasonable for people who share a common belief in the same God to figure a way to discourage violence by those who would try to perpetuate their former power base in the name of God, Feiler said.

If Islam is truly about peace, then Muslim

leaders should unite and collectively disavow the violence that others are doing in the name of their religion, he said.

I suggested to the group that perhaps we are approaching the issue in the wrong way. When we consider the prophets and the various sacred texts of the three major religions in the world, we recognize there is less agreement about doctrinal things.

For example, I continued, we may believe in the same God, but we differ about Jesus.

However, maybe all three religion's mutual tie to the ancient patriarch, Abraham, can provide a starting point?

But according to Feiler, referring to his book, *Abraham: A Journey to the Heart of Three Faiths*, "Abraham may be a flawed vessel but he's the best vessel for reconciliation we have. The answer is found in what Abraham offers, a rare vision of hope that, despite setbacks, we may be able to redefine what we think about our neighbors, our future and ourselves."

The Imam warmed to this idea, but the panel concluded all these things take time.

Besides talking about violence and religion, the panel posed complex religions questions to one another.

"Not everyone is ready to set aside their personal concerns for the good of the many," the Imam said.

"Someone greater than Al-Sistani (Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Husseini al-Sistani, Iraq's most influential Shiite Muslim cleric) will have to intervene in order to bring about real progress concerning (Iraq's) self-government."

"Why don't the Christian people follow the orders of the God so that we might enjoy more peace?" he asked.

"Unfortunately not every Christian follows the commands of God and besides, there are many Americans who follow another religion or no religion at all," I responded.

As for the violence, no religious person is immune.

"Imagine, if you will," suggested Feiler, "an empty room. You are told to move to one side of the room if you have violence in your religion. And, if you have no violence in your religion, move to the other side. One side of the room is empty. We're all guilty."

The discussion ended with Jew, Christian, and Muslim believers clasping hands in a sign of solidarity.

Although the discussion did not come up with solutions to the problems facing Iraq, the consensus reached by the panel was: One God, different faiths -- but a common commitment to peaceful coexistence, mutual support, understanding and engagement – dialog without antagonism.

NEWS...

AP: Europeans Say Iraq War Raised Threat

WASHINGTON (AP) - A majority of people living in the two countries bordering the United States and in five major European countries say they think the war in Iraq increased the threat of terrorism in the world found. In the United States, people were evenly divided on whether the war has increased or decreased the terror threat.

9/11 Victims' Kin Angered by Bush Ads

WASHINGTON (AP) - Relatives of victims of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and a firefighters union said Thursday they're angry that President Bush's new campaign ads include images of the destroyed World Trade Center and firefighters carrying a flag-draped stretcher through the rubble. They say the ads are in poor taste and accuse Bush of exploiting the attacks. Bush's campaign defended the commercials as appropriate for an election about public policy and the war on terror, saying they were a tasteful reminder of what the country has been through the last three years. The campaign had said in the past that it would not use the attacks for political gain.

African Nation Would Grant Aristide Asylum

BANGUI, Central African Republic (AP) - Central African Republic will offer ex-Haiti leader Jean-Bertrand Aristide permanent asylum if he asks, an official said Thursday. "I can't say definitively if Mr. Aristide will stay here or if he'll go, but if he asks us, we won't refuse him," said Communications Minister Parfait Mbaye.

Stewart Jury Resumes After Delay

NEW YORK (AP) - Jurors began their second day of deliberations in the trial of Martha Stewart on Thursday after an hour delay caused by a subway accident in lower Manhattan. Subway service had been disrupted after a train at a lower Manhattan station hit a person about 9:10 a.m.; the person survived.

NYC Rejects Gay Marriage Applications

NEW YORK (AP) - Dozens of same-sex couples lined up for marriage licenses in the nation's largest city but were turned away Thursday morning, even as officials in other liberal pockets vowed to continue defying long-accepted laws against the permits. Couples who came to the New York City clerk's office were handed thick letters explaining that local law prohibits gay marriages, based on a ruling a day earlier from the city's top lawyer.

Thought for the day...

Mistakes

The man who does things makes many mistakes, but he never makes the biggest mistake of all - doing nothing.

-- Benjamin Franklin

How long will you lie there, O sluggard? When will you arise from your sleep?

-- Proverbs 6:9

Meanwhile back in the States...

Makeover for Nickels Is First in 66 Years

By JEANNINE AVERSA, Associated Press Writer
WASHINGTON (AP) -- New nickels honoring the 1803 Louisiana Purchase will soon be clinking in cash registers and jangling in pockets. It's the first makeover for the five-cent piece in 66 years.

The back of the new coins look different, while the front looks the same, retaining the image of Thomas Jefferson, third president of the United States.

Millions of the new nickels have been shipped to the Federal Reserve, supplier of the nation's cash. They should start showing up in change in several weeks, officials of the U.S. Mint said.

"This marks the first time in more than half a century that Americans will see a new design on their nickels," said Mint Director Henrietta Holsman Fore, who showed off the new coins Thursday. "Take a look at history America. There is change in your change."

On the back of the new nickels, Jefferson's home, Monticello, is replaced with a scene that commemorates the Louisiana Purchase.

The back of the new nickels now headed into circulation bear the words "United States of America," "Louisiana Purchase" and "1803." There is an image of hands clasped in friendship - one with a military cuff to symbolize the U.S. government, and the other with an ornate bracelet to represent American Indians.

Above the clasped hands is a tomahawk crossed by a peace pipe. The images are similar to those on Jefferson Peace Medals, which were presented ceremonially to Indian chiefs and other important leaders. Below the clasped hands are the Latin words "E Pluribus Unum" (meaning "Out of many, one"), and hugging the bottom of the coin is the denomination: "Five Cents."

Fore said that 218 million of the nickels have now been shipped to the Federal Reserve. The Mint will make a total of 900 million of the coins, she said.

Another nickel honoring the 1804-1806 Lewis and Clark expedition will be released in the late summer or early fall, Mint officials say. Fore said another 900 million of this nickel also might be made, depending on the demand for coins.

"Americans will remember the important national events of the Louisiana Purchase and the Lewis and Clark expedition for decades to come when they look at these nickels," Fore said.

The new nickels are part of the Mint's new Westward Journey Nickel Series. The design of the old nickels with Jefferson on the front and Monticello on the back was introduced in 1938.

Vending machines will be able to accept the new nickels because their composition - 75 percent copper and 25 percent nickel - and their size remains the same, Mint officials said.

Today in History...

March 5, 1770: THE BOSTON MASSACRE

(HISTORYCHANNEL.COM) On the cold, snowy night of March 5, 1770, a mob of American colonists gathers at the Customs House in Boston and begins taunting the British soldiers guarding the building. The protesters, who called themselves Patriots, were protesting the occupation of their city by British troops, who were sent to Boston in 1768 to enforce unpopular taxation measures passed by a British parliament that lacked American representation.

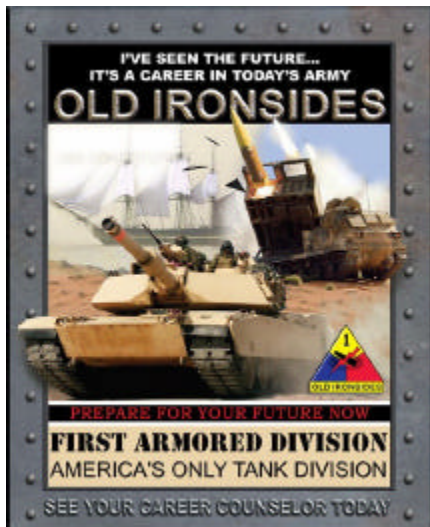
British Captain Thomas Preston, the commanding officer at the Customs House, ordered his men to fix their bayonets and join the guard outside the building. The colonists responded by throwing snowballs and other objects at the British regulars, and Private Hugh Montgomery was hit, leading him to discharge his rifle at the crowd. The other soldiers began firing a moment later, and when the smoke cleared, five colonists were dead or dying--Crispus Attucks, Patrick Carr, Samuel Gray, Samuel Maverick, and Christopher Monk--and three more were injured. Although it is unclear whether Crispus Attucks, an African American, was the first to fall as is commonly believed, the deaths of the five men are regarded by some historians as the first fatalities in the American Revolutionary War.

The British soldiers were put on trial, and patriots John Adams and Josiah Quincy agreed to defend the colonists in a show of support of the colonial justice system. When the trial ended in December 1770, two British soldiers were found guilty of manslaughter and had their thumbs branded as punishment.

The Sons of Liberty, a Patriot group formed in 1765 to oppose the Stamp Act, advertised the "Boston Massacre" as a battle for American liberty and just cause for the removal of British troops from Boston. Patriot Paul Revere made a provocative engraving of the incident, depicting the British soldiers lining up like an organized army to suppress an idealized representation of the colonist uprising. Copies of the engraving were distributed throughout the colonies and helped reinforce negative American sentiments about British rule.

In April 1775, the American Revolution began when British troops from Boston skirmished with American militiamen at the battles of Lexington and Concord. The British troops were under orders to capture Patriot leaders Samuel Adams and John Hancock in Lexington and to confiscate the Patriot arsenal at Concord. Neither missions were accomplished because of Paul Revere and William Dawes, who rode ahead of the British, warning Adams and Hancock and rousing the Patriot minutemen.

Eleven months later, in March 1776, British forces had to evacuate Boston following American General George Washington's successful placement of fortifications and cannons on Dorchester Heights. This bloodless liberation of Boston brought an end to the hated eight-year British occupation of the city. For the victory, General Washington, commander of the Continental Army, was presented with the first medal ever awarded by the Continental Congress. It would be more than five years before the Revolutionary War came to an end with British General Charles Cornwallis' surrender to Washington at Yorktown, Virginia.



LOOKING FOR EVEN MORE CHALLENGES? LOOK INTO THE U.S. ARMY SPECIAL FORCES.

The SF Recruiter is in Task Force 1st Arored Division area until March 30. The 1AD Division Reup Team will host the Special Forces Brief in the Soldier Support Center classroom (2nd floor) March 5 at 10 a.m. and 1 p.m.

Fore more information about the Special Forces recruitment program or any other reenlistment opportunity, contact your career counselor.

The Old Ironsides Report

March 5, 2004

myafn.net TV SCHEDULES: FRIDAY, MARCH 05, 2004				As of: Thursday, March 04, 2004 8:52:06 PM		
Start Time	SPORTS	ATLANTIC	SPECTRUM	PACIFIC	NEWS	Start Time
00:00		HEADLINE NEWS	KEN BURNS' HISTORY OF JAZZ - IRRESISTABLE, 1949-1955	TODAY		00:00
00:30		TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO			ARMY NEWSWATCH	00:30
01:00	PGA TOUR - FORD CHAMPIONSHIP @ DORAL: FIRST ROUND (JIP)		HORATIO HORNBLOWER : - THE WRONG WAR		LESTER HOLT LIVE	01:00
01:30		THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN				01:30
02:00	SPORTSCENTER			SESAME STREET	HEADLINE NEWS	02:00
02:30		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD			NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	02:30
03:00		4 QTRS	ROCKET POWER : - HURRICANE MAURICE/ REGGIE'S CHOICE	TELETUBBIES : - AMY'S HOUSE (PASTA)	ABC WORLD NEWS TONIGHT	03:00
03:30	NBA - SACRAMENTO KINGS @ PHILADELPHIA 76ERS	NHL - NY RANGERS @ BOSTON BRUINS	THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS	WHEEL OF FORTUNE	CBS EVENING NEWS	03:30
04:00			THE SIMPSONS : - PRINCIPAL CHARMING	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	COUNTDOWN WITH KEITH OLBERMANN	04:00
04:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - A TOUCH OF WONDER			04:30
05:00			CHARMED : - SENSE AND SENSE ABILITY	THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW	HANNITY & COLMES	05:00
06:00	NBA - DETROIT PISTONS @ PORTLAND TRAIL BLAZERS	ESPNEWS	BOSTON PUBLIC : - CHAPTER ONE	NBC NIGHTLY NEWS	THE NEWSHOUR	06:00
06:30		ESPNEWS		JUDGE JUDY		06:30
07:00		HEADLINE NEWS	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SPECIALS : - POISON!	ACCESS HOLLYWOOD	BET NIGHTLY NEWS	07:00
07:25				GUIDING LIGHT		07:25
07:30		ESPNEWS			NIGHTLY BUSINESS REPORT	07:30
08:00		HEADLINE NEWS	WALKING WITH DINOSAURS - NEW BLOOD		LARRY KING LIVE	08:00
08:13				GENERAL HOSPITAL		08:13
08:30	INSIDE THE NBA	HEADLINE NEWS	WALKING WITH PREHISTORIC BEASTS : - NEW DAWN			08:30
09:00	ESPNEWS	SESAME STREET	BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - TOUGH LOVE	HOUSE OF MOUSE : - GOOFY'S VALENTINE DATE	NEWSNIGHT WITH AARON BROWN	09:00
09:30	PARDON THE INTERRUPTION			ALL GROWN UP : - TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES		09:30
10:00	SPORTSCENTER	TELETUBBIES : - AMY'S HOUSE (PASTA)	IRON CHEF : - EGG/MICHIBA VS ZEITYEN WAN	KIM POSSIBLE (TV-7): - ANIMAL ATTRACTION	PAULA ZAHN NOW	10:00
10:30		WHEEL OF FORTUNE		MY LIFE AS A TEENAGE ROBOT (TV-7): - SEE NO EVIL/THE GREAT UNWASHED		10:30
11:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - BIG EAST: GEORGETOWN @ NOTRE DAME	THE DR. PHIL SHOW	ROCKET POWER : - HURRICANE MAURICE/ REGGIE'S CHOICE	JEOPARDY!	NIGHTLINE	11:00
11:30			THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS	HEADLINE NEWS	HEADLINE NEWS	11:30
11:46		THE OPRAH WINFREY SHOW				11:46
11:52				PACIFIC REPORT		11:52
12:00			THE SIMPSONS : - PRINCIPAL CHARMING	ESPNEWS	HARDBALL WITH CHRIS MATTHEWS	12:00
12:30			THE COSBY SHOW : - A TOUCH OF WONDER	HEADLINE NEWS		12:30
12:35		GUIDING LIGHT				12:35
12:52				PACIFIC REPORT		12:52
13:00	MEN'S COLLEGE BASKETBALL - CUSA: CINCINNATI @ DEPAUL		CHARMED : - SENSE AND SENSE ABILITY	THE SIMPSONS : - THE FAT AND THE FURRIEST	THE O'REILLY FACTOR	13:00
13:17		GENERAL HOSPITAL				13:17
13:30				THAT 70'S SHOW : - NO QUARTER		13:30
14:00		HEADLINE NEWS	BOSTON PUBLIC : - CHAPTER ONE	SURVIVOR: ALL-STARS	PRIMETIME	14:00
14:30		JUDGE JUDY				14:30
15:00	SPORTSCENTER	TODAY	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SPECIALS : - POISON!	24 : - DAY 2: 4:00 A.M.- 5:00 A.M.	GOOD MORNING AMERICA	15:00
16:00	NHL - NY RANGERS @ BOSTON BRUINS		WALKING WITH DINOSAURS - NEW BLOOD	HEADLINE NEWS		16:00
16:22				PACIFIC REPORT		16:22
16:30			WALKING WITH PREHISTORIC BEASTS : - NEW DAWN	TONIGHT SHOW WITH JAY LENO		16:30
17:00		HOUSE OF MOUSE : - GOOFY'S VALENTINE DATE	BUFFY THE VAMPIRE SLAYER : - TOUGH LOVE		HEADLINE NEWS	17:00
17:30		ALL GROWN UP : - TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES		THE LATE SHOW WITH DAVID LETTERMAN	CHANNEL ONE	17:30
17:45					ABC WORLD NEWS THIS MORNING	17:45
18:00	ESPNEWS	KIM POSSIBLE (TV-7): - ANIMAL ATTRACTION	IRON CHEF : - EGG/MICHIBA VS ZEITYEN WAN		THE EARLY SHOW	18:00
18:30	COLLEGE GAMENIGHT	MY LIFE AS A TEENAGE ROBOT (TV-7): - SEE NO EVIL/THE GREAT UNWASHED		ACCESS HOLLYWOOD		18:30
19:00	SPORTSCENTER	JEOPARDY!	ROCKET POWER : - HURRICANE MAURICE/ REGGIE'S CHOICE	AUSTIN POWERS: POWERS: INTERNATIONAL MAN OF MYSTERY		19:00
19:30		HEADLINE NEWS	THE FAIRLY ODDPARENTS			19:30
20:00	ROME IS BURNING	ESPNEWS	THE SIMPSONS : - PRINCIPAL CHARMING		FOX NEWS LIVE	20:00
20:30		HEADLINE NEWS	THE COSBY SHOW : - A TOUCH OF WONDER			20:30
20:45				AUSTIN POWERS: POWERS: THE SPY WHO SHAGGED ME		20:45
21:00	MLB - SPRING TRAINING: PHILADELPHIA PHILLIES @ NY YANKEES	THE SIMPSONS : - THE FAT AND THE FURRIEST	CHARMED : - SENSE AND SENSE ABILITY		PRIMETIME	21:00
21:30		THAT 70'S SHOW : - NO QUARTER				21:30
22:00		SURVIVOR: ALL-STARS	BOSTON PUBLIC : - CHAPTER ONE		FOX NEWS LIVE	22:00
22:30				CINEMA SECRETS : - FROM COMICS TO CINEMA		22:30
23:00		24 : - DAY 2: 4:00 A.M.- 5:00 A.M.	NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC SPECIALS : - POISON!	TODAY	HEADLINE NEWS	23:00
23:30					INSIDE POLITICS	23:30